



PITT RIVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Code of Conduct

I. INTRODUCTION

School Boards and schools are entrusted through the School Act with authority to establish codes of conduct. While recognizing the autonomy of these bodies and acknowledging the efforts they have already taken to ensure school climates are as positive as possible, the provincial standards described below are provided to assist them in developing consistent and coherent policies and practices in their communities. Although most schools have codes of conduct in place, it is expected that all British Columbia schools will revisit existing codes and/or develop new codes of conduct reflecting the provincial standards.

Pitt River Community Middle School staff, parents, and students, were involved in a process of developing this Code of Conduct based on our collective belief of what is important to us, what matters about education and learning and the positive contributions we expect our students to make. The Code of Conduct has been reviewed and adjusted with student, staff, and parent input on an annual basis to reflect current school, community, and provincial standards.

II. CODE OF CONDUCT: KEY ELEMENTS

1. Process

Pitt River Community Middle School surveyed staff and students to determine what they believed to be key components to building a safe and caring school culture through questionnaires, surveys and meetings. Key questions asked:

- What do you want your school to look like?
- How do you want your school to feel?
- How should people be treated in your school?

Pitt River Students and Staff generated a list of words that represented the type of culture they would like to see at Pitt River. Over the course of the year we will be actively focusing on the following Core Value Themes – Kindness, Inclusion, Happiness & Gratitude, Resilience & Growth Mindset, Passion. Students and teachers co-created a symbol of the type of culture they would like to see at Pitt River in order to guide the conversation and remind us of our focus.

4. Monitoring and Review

Conduct is continuously monitored to ensure codes reflect current and emerging situations and are contributing to school safety and a positive school climate.

The Code of Conduct is reviewed and improved in light of evidence gathered and/or relevant research, and is revisited as part of a regular cycle of policy review. Data gathered from class reviews, classroom evaluations, and monthly school leadership discussions, as well as feedback from students, support staff, and PAC will be used to review, evaluate and monitor the Code of Conduct.

5. Alignment:

Pitt River Middle School's Code of Conduct is aligned with the BC Human Rights Code, compatible with those from other middle schools in the district as well as the family of schools in our geographical area. It is also in alignment with the District Code of Conduct. Discussions with the members of our community of schools take place regularly throughout the school year. Structured opportunities to discuss these issues occur during district meetings such as superintendent meetings and middle level meetings.

6. Standards:

Pitt River Community Middle School promotes the values expressed in the BC Human Rights Code respecting the rights of all individuals in accordance with the law- prohibiting discrimination based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation – in respect of discriminatory publication and discrimination in accommodation, service and facility in the school environment.

The purpose of Pitt River Middle's Code of Conduct:

To establish and maintain safe, caring and orderly environments for purposeful learning; to establish and maintain appropriate balances among individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities; to clarify and publish expectations for student behaviour while at school, while going to and from school, and while attending any school function or activity at any location.

Conduct Expectations

These expectations apply to behaviour at school, during school-organized or sponsored activities, and behaviours beyond these times that negatively impacts the safe, caring or orderly environment of the school, and/or student learning.

Conduct expectations may be connected to individual acts of bullying, harassment, physical violence, use of banned substances, and illegal acts has the effect of negatively impacting the school environment, whether that conduct occurs on or off School District property, at a school sponsored function or activity or otherwise.

Unacceptable conduct

- As per Section 8 of Human Rights Code of British Columbia, students shall not discriminate against others on the basis of the race, religion, colour, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, family status, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or physical or mental disability. Furthermore, as per Section 7 of the Human Rights Code of British Columbia, no student shall publish or display anything that would indicate an intention to discriminate against another, or expose them to contempt or ridicule, on the aforementioned bases. Using/naming a physical illness, disability or condition to threaten, harass or intimidate others in the community is unacceptable

Students may be subject to discipline under the school and/ or District Code of Conduct for any conduct which has the effect of negatively impacting the school environment, whether that conduct occurs on or off School District property, at a school sponsored function or activity or otherwise.

Rising expectations

As students mature and progress through their three years at middle school, it is expected that the level of personal accountability will increase and that leadership skills will develop and progress, in preparation for successful high school experiences.

While at middle school students are expected to:

- take responsibility for their actions;
- exhibit socially responsible behaviours;
- understand that consequences for irresponsible or unsafe behaviour also escalate accordingly;
- understand that levels of maturity, personal responsibility, self- discipline, modeling and leadership are expected to improve

Consequences

- Wherever possible and appropriate, the focus will be on consequences that are restorative in nature rather than punitive.
- Responses to unacceptable conduct may include any/or all of the following (but not limited to): discussion with the student, discussion with a staff member and student, discussion with administration, office referrals, telephone call home, meeting with parent(s);
- Small group mediation and/or conflict resolution (student to student)
- Student-initiated consequence (with guidance from administration)
- School or community counseling
- Alternative-to-suspension meetings and/or programs
- Community service
- Behaviour plan
- Formal suspension Level I, II or III for serious or dangerous behaviours

Special considerations may apply to the imposition of consequences on a student with special needs if the student is unable to comply with this Code of Conduct, due to a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional, or behavioural nature.

Appropriate consequences are given on an individual basis.

All reasonable steps to prevent retaliation by a person against a student who has made a complaint of a breach of a code of conduct will be made.

Searches

A search by school officials of a student under their authority or a search of student property may be undertaken if the school has reasonable grounds to believe a school rule has been or will be violated, and that the evidence of that violation will be found in the location or on the person of the student being searched. Students know that their teachers and other school authorities are responsible for providing a safe learning environment and maintaining order and discipline at school. As a result, they must know that, where reasonable grounds exist, this may require searches of students, their lockers and their personal effects and the seizure of prohibited items.

Students should also be aware that the schools may collect, use and disclose personal information about students for the purposes of investigating and addressing student misconduct, safety and maintaining order and discipline in school. Such collection and use of student information may include information that is obtained from witnesses or collected from other secondary information sources (e.g. social media). All personal information of students collected by the school will be collected in compliance with and under the authority of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (ss. 26(a),(b), and(c)) and the School Act. Questions about the collection, use or disclosure of student personal information should be directed to the Associate Director of Information and Learning Technologies Stephen Whiffin, at swhiffin@sd43.bc.ca.

Notification

In instances where serious violations of the code of conduct have occurred, school officials may have a responsibility to communicate to other parties. These parties may include some and/all of the following:

- Parents of all students who have been involved and affected;
- School district officials, as required by school district policy;
- Police and/or agencies, as required by law;
- All parents within the school community, in cases where it is important to reassure all members of the school community that school officials are aware of a serious situation or incident and are taking appropriate actions to address the matter.

Electronic Device Policy

Pitt River has implemented a policy that allows students to carry electronic devices such as iPods and cell phones with them at all times. Use during instructional time is at the discretion of the individual teacher. The impetus for this policy was to create an environment which allows for these devices to be used as learning tools in classrooms, and also allow students the freedom to enjoy them during their free time. This policy also allows teachers the opportunity to become more comfortable managing the use of these devices in their classrooms and provides a forum for teaching students to use them appropriately; this is very important as it appears that as personal electronic devices evolve they will likely become a mainstay in classrooms. Electronic devices (iPods and cell phones) can be carried at all times, but only be used in classrooms at teacher discretion. During break times, students can use the devices as long as it is in an appropriate manner.

General Expectations:

- Ringers must always remain on silent. Any texting during break times should be in the form of information sharing or positive social messaging.
- Accessing social media sites at school is not permitted unless required by a teacher.
- When using iPods, volume must not distract others and earphones must be removed when talking to an adult.

Inappropriate Use:

- Not following teacher instructions/classroom policy
- Using the device in a negative way towards others
- Absolutely no photos/videos without the permission of all parties involved
- Using technology in a way that compromises the safe and caring climate of Pitt River Middle

Progressive consequences for inappropriate use may include:

- Teacher and classroom based warnings and loss of privileges
- After repeated classroom warnings, the device will be sent to the office where it can be picked up at the end of that day.
- If inappropriate use continues, students will be asked to leave the device at home; parents will also be contacted.
- Any incident deemed serious enough could result in the immediate loss of this privilege for an extended period of time.
- Parents are asked to contact the school office to communicate with their children as opposed to texting or calling them during class time. Otherwise, they should not expect a response until break times.
- As we are not mandating that students bring electronic devices to school, they do so at their own risk. The school assumes no responsibility for damage, loss, theft etc.

Pitt River Middle – Respectful Attire

Pitt River Middle is an institute of learning which brings together many different families with varying values and cultural beliefs. Within our code of conduct, students have the right to dress in a way that

reflects individual expression of identity and socio-cultural norms. Students have the responsibility to dress modestly and with respect for the health and safety requirements of all educational activities.

To promote an emotionally and physically safe space for all individuals, students are asked to refrain from wearing attire that:

- represents smoking, alcohol or drug use, or other inappropriate paraphernalia;
- displays words or pictures that are derogatory, insulting, racist, sexist, threatening, violent or homophobic
- hides their face (hats, sunglasses and hoods) to ensure safety and identification of members of our community. Classroom specific rules may apply at teacher discretion within their own rooms.
- is inappropriate for the educational purposes of the learning environment. Clothing choices that expose underwear, buttocks, midriff, pectorals and breasts are not permitted. We ask that the modesty of the learning environment and common sense be the guide.

The school code of conduct is in place to ensure that students have a guideline for safe conduct in their place of learning. It is an ever-evolving document where changes to language or procedure will be discussed with parents, staff and students. The goal is always to create a safe place physically and emotionally for our students.